

# Municipal Services

building a livable community



An important element of the local government's planning process is the provision of community facilities and services. Community facilities are defined as major capital improvements, including, but not limited to transportation, drainage, water, parks and recreational facilities. Facilities and services are planned to meet Charleston's current needs and future demands. In order to provide the highest quality municipal services, the City must manage the extension of its service areas and ensure municipal services and facilities are adequate to accommodate growth.

The City of Charleston recognizes the importance of having a long-range strategic plan for capital improvements as a vital part of the City's mission to preserve and enhance the quality of life for our citizens. The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a separate five-year plan that matches available funding with the City's highest priority capital needs. The plan includes investment in projects in all functional areas of City government. The Century V Plan however is a ten year planning document that uses the CIP and other projections to prepare for a decade of service needs.

## Capital Improvement Planning

Capital improvement planning and project execution are led by the Parks Department. The City's Capital Projects Review Committee, which includes all City departments, manages capital projects and annually recommends capital projects to City Council for execution. The CIP includes new and continuing projects that are categorized by governmental function. The 2010-2014 Capital Improvement Plan calculates \$276,721,444 in planned expenditures. Many of the projects involve the collaboration of multiple departments.

### 2010-2014 CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Percentage of Total Capital Improvement Projects Budgeted by Function\*

Culture / Recreation	52.2%
Recurring Projects	12.2%
Urban / Community Development	10.0%
Public Safety	10.0%
Public Service	8.9%
General Government	4.5%
Enterprise	2.2%

\*The Capital Improvement Plan is updated annually and can be found in the City of Charleston Budget Book at: [www.charlestoncity.info/dept/content.aspx?nid=2031](http://www.charlestoncity.info/dept/content.aspx?nid=2031)



Police Crime Scene Unit: Alternate Light Source Processing to find latent evidence

## Public Safety

Public Safety capital projects focus on improvements needed to sustain exceptional levels of emergency services for the fire and police protection needs of the City of Charleston.

### Police Department

Charleston has the largest police force in South Carolina, with a staff of 546. The City Police Department is headed by one full-time chief and has 382 sworn police officers, 137



Charleston Police Department: Traffic Mustang

civilians and 27 reserve police officers. There are currently eight patrol divisions and several specialty divisions, including SWAT, Victims Services, Traffic, Animal Control, Crime Scene Unit, Disaster Response Team, Hostage Negotiation Unit, Explosive Devices Unit, and many others (For more information, visit [www.charleston-sc.gov](http://www.charleston-sc.gov).) A map of the City's police coverage and population densities is provided in the appendix.

### Fire Department

The City of Charleston Fire Department consists of 20 fire companies located throughout the City. A full-time Fire Chief supervises three Assistant Chiefs and 12 Battalion Chiefs. New stations are planned in Carolina Bay (West Ashley) and on Clements Ferry Road (Cainhoy). Fire protection is also coordinated under a mutual aid agreement with area public service districts and Berkeley County volunteers. A map of the existing and planned multi-purpose public safety stations is included in the "Overall Plan Maps."

### Emergency Services

Charleston County provides emergency medical services (EMS) to the City of Charleston. Disaster and emergency preparations are coordinated by the City of

Charleston in conjunction with other local, regional and national governments and agencies. Annual hurricane drills are coordinated with the South Carolina Emergency Management Division, Charleston County Emergency Management, and City of Charleston.

### Public Services

The City of Charleston Public Services Department is comprised of building inspections, engineering, road and sidewalk maintenance, storm drainage and flood control, garbage and trash collection, and street sweeping. The Department of Public Service works with numerous other local and regional agencies.

### Public Service Capital Projects

About nine percent of the currently planned capital improvement projects are for public services, but these account for a much larger percentage based on dollar amount due to the high costs of these projects, including several drainage projects (based on the 2010-2014 CIP). These projects are funded mainly from the revenues produced by the City of Charleston's Stormwater Utility Fee and revenues in the Drainage Fund.



Intersection of Cherry and Bee Street—Flooding caption goes here about stormwater and this area.

### Stormwater Capital Improvements

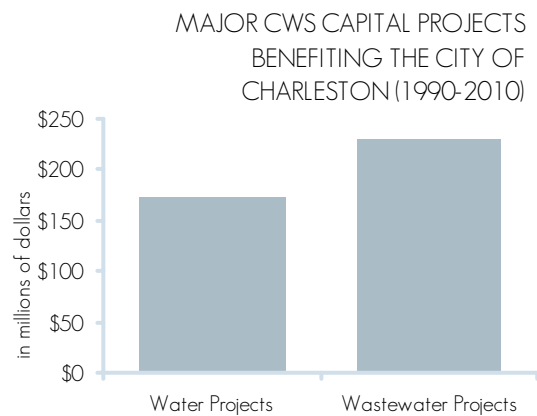
In 1984, the City of Charleston adopted its Master Drainage and Floodplain Management Plan, and more recently developed the City of Charleston Stormwater Management Program (SWMP) in 2008. Since the master plan's adoption, the City has successfully completed its two highest priority major drainage improvement projects and continues to fund and complete necessary improvements. Funding sources have included a \$9.5 million bond, South Carolina Department of Transportation participation (\$1,990,000), Federal Emergency Management Agency participation (\$2,595,000) and a South Carolina Electric and Gas settlement (\$2,500,000).

To fund future improvements, City staff must continue to work aggressively with state and federal leaders to secure the funding for pro-

jects that improve drainage, particularly on state and federal roads. It is anticipated that future projects will be funded by a combination of funding sources including revenue bonds supported by stormwater fees, FEMA grants for flood mitigation projects, SCDOT participation and perhaps a federal appropriation through the Transportation Bill Water Resources Development Act (WRDA).

### Charleston Water System

Water and sewer service is provided by the Charleston Water System (CWS) in most areas including West Ashley, Daniel Island, James Island and parts of Johns Island and Cainhoy. CWS strives to maintain a reliable water and wastewater service that can support existing and future needs through careful planning and investment in the expanding



Source: Charleston Water System

infrastructure. Major CWS capital projects since 1990 have directly or indirectly benefited the City of Charleston, including: \$172.8 million in water service projects and \$230.6 million wastewater service projects, for a combined total over \$403 million in capital improvements benefiting Charleston.

### Environmental Services Division

The Environmental Service Division is responsible for maintaining a clean, safe and healthful environment for residents and visitors of the City of Charleston. This division manages the collection of refuse, and street sweeping.

Garbage Collection serves residential and some commercial customers. Residential garbage is collected weekly, from standardized containers using semi-automated collection equipment. Trash Collection collects bulk trash and yard trimmings for all city residents weekly.

Additionally, Grounds Custodians are assigned daily in designated commercial areas to empty public trash receptacles and pick up litter. Street Sweeping is scheduled for certain areas to sweep city streets with regenerative air sweepers.



City Swimming Lesson at WL Stephens Center

### Cultural and Recreational Services

Recreation function holds the largest percentage of capital projects based on the total number of projects. These projects will improve existing parks and facilities and develop new spaces for the community to enjoy. The Department of Recreation offers a diverse array of programs, sports, and activities. Similarly, the Office of Cultural Affairs (OCA) is committed to promoting and fostering excellence through artistic expressions, including two annual festivals. All OCA festivals and special events include an arts education and/or outreach component to further connect our community through the arts.

### Urban and Community Services

Urban and Community Development projects improve infrastructure and enhance the envi-

ronment in targeted areas throughout the City, as well as provide affordable housing for citizens. The Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) provides a range of services that employ a multi-faceted approach for neighborhood revitalization. HCD also oversees the Renewal Community Initiative and Brownfields Redevelopment efforts. The Ombudsman and Citizen Support System also provide community services and assistance to citizens and visitors.



The City of Charleston has converted many parking meters to allow Smart Cards.

### Traffic and Transportation Services

The City of Charleston Department of Traffic and Transportation (T&T) studies, plans, and implements traffic operations, and transportation services and facilities to maintain the safe and efficient movement of people and goods throughout the City. A few notable projects



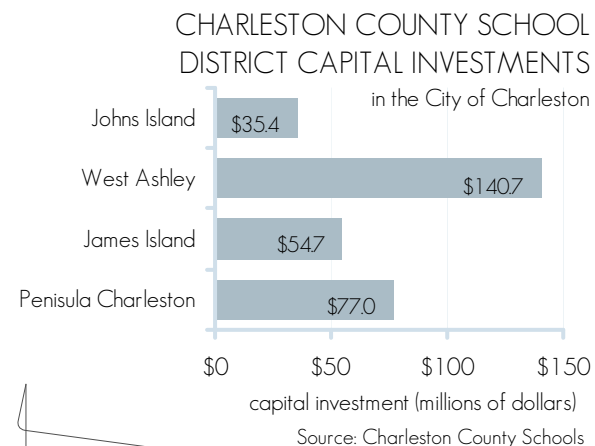
From June 1990 to June 2009, the College of Charleston has made \$238,567,217 worth of capital improvements.

include traffic operations work for the new Arthur Ravenel, Jr. Bridge, the conversion of Rutledge and Ashley Avenues to two-way traffic to improve safe and control speed, and the SmartCard Parking Meter Program.

### Educational Services

Area public schools are located in the Charleston County and Berkeley County School Districts. The City is also served by a large number of private schools located throughout the region. Public institutions of higher education in Charleston include the College of Charleston (the nation's 13th oldest university) and the Citadel (the state's military college). Charleston is also home to the only college in the country that offers bachelors degrees in the building arts, The American College of the Building Arts. Other institu-

tions include Charleston Southern University, Charleston School of Law, the Medical University of South Carolina, Roper Hospital School of Practical Nursing, Art Institute of Charleston, Trident Technical College, and branches of Webster University, and the Low-country Graduate Center.



## CITY OF CHARLESTON NEW FACILITIES OR MAJOR RENOVATIONS

Name	Year	Location
Daniel Island Municipal Complex	2002	Cainhoy Peninsula
Lowcountry Senior Center	2002	James Island
Fire Station 17	2003	Johns Island
Fire Station 13	2004	James Island
City Art Gallery	2005	Peninsula
180 Lockwood Municipal Complex	2006	Peninsula
Old Slave Mart Museum Renovations	2007	Peninsula
Fire Station 19	2007	West Ashley
Digital Corridor "Flagship" Business Center	2008	Peninsula
City Hall Major Renovation	2008	Peninsula
116 Meeting Street Major Renovation	2009	Peninsula
Dock Street Theater Major Renovation	2010	Peninsula
City Market Renovations	2010	Peninsula
A.W. Christopher Community Center	2010	Peninsula

**NOTE:** Facilities and major renovations listed are not meant to be an exhaustive list of all community facility project. Projects listed only included all cost over \$50,000.

## CITY OF CHARLESTON MAJOR PARK DEVELOPMENTS AND IMPROVEMENTS

Name	Year	Location
Maybank Tennis Center Renovations	2001	James Island
Cool Blow Park/Simmons Playground	2001	Peninsula
Liberty Square	2001	Peninsula
Marion Square Renovation	2001	Peninsula
DI Waterfront Park & Trails	2002	Cainhoy Peninsula
Family Circle Tennis Center Facility	2002	Cainhoy Peninsula
James Island Recreation Center Upgrade	2003	James Island
Miracle League Field	2005	West Ashley
Freedom Park	2006	Cainhoy Peninsula
Hampton Park Upgrade	2006	Peninsula
St. Julien Devine Community Center	2006	Peninsula
Morris Square Plaza	2007	Peninsula
Municipal Golf Course Upgrades	2007	James Island
Simonton Park	2007	Peninsula
West Ashley Bikeway Extension	2007	West Ashley
M. P. Demetre Park and Pier	2008	James Island
Cannonborough/Eliotborough Park	2008	Peninsula
Ashley River Road Bike Path	2008	West Ashley
Bees Landing Recreation Complex	2010	West Ashley

**Source:** City of Charleston Parks Department

## City of Charleston Capital Improvement—Selected Projects



**Charleston City Hall**, underwent a top to bottom restoration project which was completed in 2008.



**Ellis Oaks Land Acquisition** on James island, along Folly Road in front of Lowes.



**Lower King Street Streetscaping Project**, which was completed in 2009.



**Maybank Tennis Center** on James Island



**116 Meeting Street**, City office space for BF&RC, was renovated in 2009



**Demetre Park and Pier** on James Island offers stunning views of Charleston Harbor



## City of Charleston Capital Improvement—Selected Projects



**Renovated Dock Street Theatre** February 1726, Dock Street became the first building designed for theatrical use in the Americas. June 2007, City of Charleston closed the theatre to begin a three year, multi-million dollar renovation. March 2010, the renovated theatre reopened to the public.



**Bees Landing Recreation Center** in West Ashley, was completed in 2010



**Fire Station 19** on Bees Ferry Road was completed in 2007.



**Lowcountry Senior Center** on James Island



**Market Hall Building** was completely restored in 2004



**Family Circle Tennis Stadium** on Daniel Island was completed in 2002.

### Development Impact Fee Program

The City of Charleston charges impact fees on new development to help fund certain capital improvements. Funds collected from these fees pay for the purchase of equipment and public facilities that are necessitated by (and benefit) the new development. The City of Charleston first began collecting impact fees in 2003 and has not increased fees to date. The current impact fee ordinance was adopted and added to the Comprehensive Plan in 2003 and will expire on December 31, 2015. Prior to its expiration, the City plans to re-evaluate the program and extend it as needed to continue to fund capital improvements. Until then, the City plans to continue with the existing impact fee program summarized in this chapter and proposes candidates for funding should the program continue past 2015.

### Land Use and Development Assumptions

Impact fees are a one-time assessment on new development. Land use and development assumptions are used to develop capital planning priorities and the impact fee program. As described in the land use element, the City identifies a defined geographic boundary between suburban and rural areas called the Urban Growth

Boundary as well as the following land use classifications: Rural, Suburban edge, Suburban, Urban, Neighborhood Centers, Urban Centers, Urban Core, Special District Campuses, Special District Job Centers, Special District Highways, Special District Industrial, Future Planning Areas, Water, Parks, Conserved Areas and Natural Areas.

Capital investments are directed to urban and suburban areas of the City. Infill development is encouraged in most existing neighborhoods. It is anticipated that infill development will occur with land uses and densities comparable to that of the existing neighborhoods. New neighborhood development will occur at higher densities in areas already developing at suburban densities and in locations where urban services and infrastructure all already available. The suburban pattern will be punctuated by higher density, mixed-use Neighborhood Centers and Job Centers. This pattern is illustrated on the Overall Plan Map.

These assumptions and the existing zoning, land use patterns and approved development proposals were collectively analyzed to develop capital needs and the impact fee program.

### Growth and Demand Factors

Impact fee amounts were calculated based future projections for housing units and non-residential development. Actual development rates have varied; thus annual revenue from development impact fees and the related costs vary from these projections. The growth and demand factors presented in the chart below and in detail in the 2000 Century V Plan Section E(1). These factors are used to estimates the demand for public facilities and to guide capital planning for the impact fee program.

IMPACT FEE  
GROWTH AND DEMAND FACTORS

YEAR	2000	2015
Non-Residential Space (square footage)	51,813,547	74,219,403
Population	96,650	138,741
Housing Units	44,143	63,710
Occupancy Rate	91.5%	91.5%
Residential Households	40,391	58,295
Single Family Detached Households* (~ 2.54 ppl/household)	22,791	33,766
Other Households* (~ 1.85 ppl/household)	21,331	29,944

\* <1% of housing units are boats, RV's, vans, etc. and are not include in the household calculations.

Source: Census 2000 data, City of Charleston data

Projections used for the initial creation of the Impact Fee Program in 2003 are based on Census 2000 data and projections of population, housing units, occupancy rate and households to the year 2015 (see: "Impact Fee Growth and Demand Factors" table). Housing unit estimates are based on City of Charleston building permit data. The chart also includes Census 2000 estimates of people per household, also known as household size. Household size is a useful measure to understand the demand for certain city services, like public safety. This measurement is taken in two categories of residential units - single family detached house and "other" multiple unit structures. The Census 2000 household size for a single family detached unit in Charleston was 2.54 people per household. The Census 2000 household size for all "other" categories is an average of 1.85 people per household.

Also, Charleston County Tax Records and City of Charleston development approvals were analyzed to determine the amount of non-residential development square footage located within the corporate limits of Charleston and to project the rate of development anticipated from 2003 to 2015. However, since non-residential

development is sometimes concentrated in specific areas of the City, land use and zoning recommendations were analyzed as well to adjust projections accordingly. These projections are the basis the impact fee program analysis.

### Impact Fee Program Analysis

According to state law, impact fees may be used to pay capital costs associated with public facilities such as sanitation, roads, stormwater control, and public safety. They may be used to finance the construction of facilities, the purchase of land, or the equipment that is needed to provide these services. Capital investments are eligible for funding if the individual unit cost is greater than \$100,000. Since 2003, Charleston has imposed a citywide impact fee for environmental and public safety services only. With appropriate data and planning, other services may warrant an impact fee program in the future.

The fees established are proportionate to anticipated demand for these services by new development. Developing a rational and fair estimate of the cost of these services first involved evaluating the current level of service for environmental services and public

safety throughout the existing City. Also, data from the City Police, Fire and Public Services Departments were used to evaluate the level of current and future demand.



City of Charleston Example Garbage Truck Photo Goes here with a caption about it

### Environmental Services

Environmental Services uses a central garage and office on Milford Street for operations. Additional capital infrastructure includes vehicles needed for garbage and trash collection. The City's existing level of service includes a weekly garbage and trash collection service to residential customers and some commercial businesses. On Daniel Island and the Cainhoy Peninsula, the city contracts a garbage collection company to provide collection services.

Additional capital investment in garbage and trash collection apparatus has been necessitated by new development. Since 2003, the City has used \$644,771 in impact fees to purchase the following:

- One Garbage Truck, \$122,258 (2005),
- One Garbage Truck, \$126,540 (2006),
- One Garbage Truck, \$133,129 (2007),
- One Garbage Truck, \$146,585 (2008),

- One Street Sweeper, \$116,259 (2009).

The City examined the existing routes and projected growth rates to estimate future, increased demand in garbage and trash collection. In 2003, the average garbage truck route serviced 600 units. It was estimated that an additional 15,899 dwelling units would be constructed in the City by the end of 2015. This results in the need for

approximately 26 new garbage routes, thus requiring seven additional trucks to be added to the City fleet. In 2003, the cost of one garbage truck was \$185,400. The total estimated capital investment needed to serve new development from 2003 to 2015 was \$1,297,800. Using this estimate, the development impact fee was set at \$82 per unit and has not increased (see: Environmental Services Development Impact Fee Calculation).

### ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEE CALCULATION

Garbage route:	600 units per route average
Additional units:	15,899 new units anticipated
Additional routes:	26 new routes to be created
Additional trucks*:	7 new trucks needed
Cost of one truck**:	\$185,400 (one truck)
Total Investment:	\$1,297,800 (seven trucks)
Cost per unit: (Total/Units=Fee)	\$82 impact fee per unit (\$1,297,800/15,899=\$82)

SOURCE: Impact fees were created in 2003. \*Based on 2003 estimates and projections for service through 2015. \*\*Based on the 2003 estimated cost of a standard garbage truck. Costs vary.

NOTE: As of 2010, the price of a garbage truck has increased to \$215,393, but the average units per route is now 650. Using the same formula, the fee if increased would be about \$95 per unit. This however does not account for any Berkeley County services. The City plans to re-evaluate the fee prior to the program expiration for a renewal and potential increase starting 2015. The fee was not increased per inflation as previously recommended.

### PUBLIC SAFETY DEVELOPMENT IMPACT FEE CALCULATION

Source of Fire Calls*	% of Calls	Calculation of Impact Fee	Impact Fee
Residential	62%	62% of capital improvement cost / # of residential units = fee	\$79.00 per dwelling unit
Non-Residential	38%	38% of capital improvement cost / amount of non-residential square footage = fee	\$0.04 per square foot

SOURCE: Impact fees were created in 2003. \*Based on 3256 service calls to the Fire Department from 1/1/2001 to 12/31/2002.

NOTE: The breakdown of calls has remained about the same each year since the program's inception. In 2009, 67% of call came from residential sources and 33% from non-residential. Based on 8506 service calls from 1/1/2009 to 12/31/2009. The cost of a facilities and equipment has increased however. In 2010, a two bay fire station with police substation (not including land or any equipment) is estimated at \$3 million. These costs are expected to increase to about \$5 million for stations built in five to ten years. While costs have increased per inflation, fees have not. The City plans to review the fee analysis prior to renewing the program to study adjustments that are needed.

### Public Safety

The City of Charleston provides police and fire service to all residents and properties within the municipal limits. The City Fire Stations Map in the Overall Plan Maps chapter illustrates existing fire station locations and proposed station locations where it is anticipated that new stations will be needed to serve new development. The City Police Coverage Map (in Overall Plan Maps) shows team offices, headquarters locations, police team coverage areas, and the density of residents in these areas.

Public safety facilities funded with impact fees are primarily fire stations, but each also serves

as a substation to the City Police Department and provides resources to other public safety agencies like County EMS. The City Fire Department's goal is to maintain a station within a six minute total response time of every customer. Currently, some areas of West Ashley and the Cainhoy Peninsula are outside of this service standard and in need of additional stations. The newest station in the City opened in 2007 on Bees Ferry Road in West Ashley. Stations in the Carolina Bay Neighborhood (West Ashley) and on Clements Ferry Road (Cainhoy) are planned and two others proposed (see: Proposed Public Safety Stations Map).

Police team station standards are more flexible than fire standards. They are based on an eight team patrol system that covers each area of the City. In the City of Charleston, police stations and substations are generally sited for every fifteen to twenty thousand people, with limited exceptions. One such exception is the Cainhoy Peninsula. Other factors affecting the location of new stations include the density of development and the number of people living and working in an area.

During the first Impact Fee Program's planning period, the City did not anticipate that existing

stations would require expansion or new equipment as the result of new development; thus no impact fee funds were or have been allocated to existing facilities. However, growth projections identified three areas of the City that, because of new growth, require additional fire and police facilities: 1) Outer West Ashley, 2) the Cainhoy Peninsula, and 3) Daniel Island. New stations have been added to outer West Ashley and Daniel Island since the impact fee program began. Police substations have been included in the new fire facilities and are planned in each of the proposed, new fire stations (see: Proposed Public Safety Stations Map). Since 2003, the City has utilized \$674,426 in impact fee funds for the following:

- Bees Ferry Multipurpose Public Safety Station: \$152,434 toward the facility construction (2005);
- Debt service for the 2009 fire truck fund: 61,035 toward a pumper truck that costs \$460,957 (2009); and
- Budget funds to the 2010 fire truck fund: \$460,957 toward a pumper truck (2010).

To calculate the public safety impact fee used to fund these improvements, emergency calls to the City Fire Department categorized by land use were tallied to determine the

proportionate share factors for residential and non-residential sources. In 2002, the Charleston Fire Department responded to 4,437 calls for service. 3,256 of these calls could be categorized into two sources: residential (62%) and non-residential (38%). The percentage of calls from each source was used to estimate the proportion shares of the capital cost. Over the past few years, the ratio of residential to non-residential calls has remained close to the original tally. In 2009, 67% of call came from residential sources and 33% from non-residential (see: Public Safety Development Impact Fee Calculation).

Analysis of calls for service reveals that station coverage overlaps which ensures a high level of public safety. The resources at each station provide backup support for all other stations within the system. Since public safety investments contribute to a citywide system of emergency response, impact fee is calculated and applied citywide. The calculation of the public safety impact fee for new residential dwelling units is \$79.00 per unit and \$0.04 per square foot for non-residential development.

### Double Payment for Capital Improvements

Where double payment for capital facilities would occur upon implementation of an impact fee, a fee credit should be applied. This would occur where previous capital investments are paid for with bonds and execution of the fee is proposed to a service area that is not citywide or specifically tied to individual unit impacts. For more information, reference City of Charleston Ordinance Section 2-271.

### Impact Fee Exceptions

State law provides exceptions for affordable housing and economic development provided the jurisdiction proposes a process for considering and approving such exceptions. Such exceptions are detailed in the 2000 Century V Comprehensive Plan Section E-1(c) and City of Charleston Ordinance Section 2-271.

### Administration of Impact Fees

Development impact fees are charged when the individual building permits are issued by the City of Charleston Department of Public Service. The South Carolina Development Fees Act requires accounting procedures that ensures monies collected from these fees are used only to fund the capital improvements outlined in the Impact Fee Program.

### Re-evaluating the Program

The City of Charleston plans to reassessed the impact fee program for an extension in 2015. Currently, the city has decided not to increase the fees annually per inflation or per adjustments to the growth and demand factors that were measured in 2003. It is likely that the fee will increase when reassessed proportionate to the rising cost of equipment and facilities funded by the program. Also, the City has not yet identified funding that could be used to offset the costs associated with waiving the impact fees for affordable housing, as recommended in Section E(1) of the 2000 Century V Plan.

*+The Impact Fee Program is included in the City of Charleston Comprehensive Plan Update in accordance with the South Carolina Development Impact Fee Act.*

### Municipal Services Recommendations

1. Establish adequate public facility standards consistent with the service standards throughout the City.
2. Continue to focus the City's annexation efforts on urban and sub-urban areas within the Urban Growth Boundary.
3. Manage the provision of municipal services and facilities in rural, suburban and urban areas.

4. Continue to implement impact fees for environmental services and public safety facilities that will ensure the adequate provision of these services to growing areas of the City.
5. Provide an annual report of development impact fee funds and purchases.
6. Identify sources of fund that can be used to offset the costs associated with waiving the impact fees for affordable housing.
7. Re-evaluate the existing impact fee program prior to its expiration.
8. Research and evaluate candidates (facilities and equipment) for the existing impact fee program.
9. Research and evaluate other City services that may need additional funding due to growth and analyze existing City revenue streams for available funds for these services.

### Municipal Services Goal

Ensure the highest quality public services and facilities to city residents by targeting municipal growth to urban and suburban areas and planning for capital improvements to support city growth.



